

2014 Annual Report to the School Community

Yarrabah School

School Number: 5142



Name of School Principal:

Matthew Harris

Name of School Council
President:

Keith Smyth

Date of Endorsement:

16 / 03 / 2015

All Victorian government school teachers meet the registration requirements of the Victorian Institute of Teaching (www.vit.vic.edu.au).

This school meets prescribed minimum standards for registration as regulated by the Victorian Registration and Qualifications Authority (VRQA) in accordance with the Education and Training Reform Act 2006, inclusive of those schools granted an exemption by the VRQA under the 'Student enrolment numbers' and/or 'Curriculum framework for schools - languages program' minimum standards until 31 December 2014.

About Our School

School Context

Yarrabah School caters for 155.2 school aged and 64 Early Education Program students who have mild, moderate to severe intellectual and developmental disabilities. All students are in receipt of the Program for Students with Disabilities (PSD). They are primarily diagnosed with intellectual disability and/or Autism. Yarrabah is the school of choice for many families. This is evidenced by the large percentage of families who choose to send their children from outside the transport zone. Our innovative, practical programs are based on Individual Learning Plans, promoting enriched communication skills, independence, personal wellbeing and self-esteem in a community atmosphere.

The school is organised into 6 sections from K-12. Subsection 1 is known as the 'Early Education Program'. This section includes student participation in 'Tiny Tots' (Playgroup 0 – 2.8yrs) and Early Education (2.5 – 5 years). Subsection 2 is known as the 'Lower Junior' (5 - 7yrs). Subsection 3 is known as the 'Upper Junior' school (7 – 10yrs). Subsection 4 is known as 'Middles' (10 – 12yrs). Subsection 5 is known as 'Inters'. (13 and 15yrs) or the equivalent of years 7 – 9. Subsection 6 is known as 'Seniors' (15 – 18yrs) or year 10 – 12.

Our school population is diverse and comes from within and outside our designated transport area (DTA).

Our families come from a wide range of backgrounds and cultures. Parents hold high expectations of Yarrabah School and our capacity to support student learning, wellbeing and independence. Intellectual disability does not discriminate and the school currently has an SFO of 4.6. The parents are strong contributors to school council and fundraising with a highly active Parent Support Committee and social media presence on Facebook.

There is a strong connectedness between staff and families which is supported through the employment of a Chaplain. The school provides significant parent support ranging from counselling, assistance with respite care, Centrelink, case management applications and education programs. The school Assistant Principals provide direct support to families through the Positive Parenting Program, Early Education Transition program, a dedicated Playgroup for children from 0 – 2.5 and support for all families experiencing difficulties with truancy, transport, domestic violence, mental illness, integration opportunities and general wellbeing. A 'LinkIt' homework program also operates to connect school and home learning.

Parents actively participate in school events which include 'Come See' programs, School Council, fund raising and resource development (this sense of community extends to our affiliations with other local education settings).

Our staff, consist of teachers, education support staff (ESS) including therapists (Speech Pathologists, Occupational Therapists, Physiotherapists), specialist (PE, Art, Music, Outdoor Education, Life Skills, library, ICT) and School Chaplain. All staff are highly committed to achieve the best outcomes for each student. ESS are highly valued and the school recognises this commitment by paying each ESS their lunch break. The ESS are respected as equals by their teacher colleagues. Professional learning, cooperative planning, peer observations and professional discussions ensure the outcomes for students are paramount, utilising researched best practice and latest technologies. Our staff retention is very stable. Staff want to stay at this school. Staff are loyal and committed in supporting a nurturing, educational environment that maximizes each student's independence.

Leadership foster a culture of support, wellbeing and transparency with each other and families. The leadership team is made up of 4 Teachers, 1 Therapist, the business manager and Principal Class.

Our facilities and buildings have expanded significantly over the past 4 years. During this period four new portable buildings and an Art House have been added. A senior / fitness playground, new middle school playground space, Workskills shed and Yarrabah Training Centre have been added. The facilities are well maintained and contribute to the friendly, attractive environment. Future site planning, will aim to provide developmental learning environments that reinforce social skills, tolerance, care and support.

The Life Skills Centre, the Art House, library and sensory garden, hydrotherapy centre, Hands On Learning workshop, purpose built Sensory Room, outdoor learning courtyards between junior and middle classrooms, and Early Education Centre (including outdoor learning spaces) provide additional resources for students to engage in learning. Most of these facilities have been funded through locally raised funds and grant applications.

Students experience two graduations during their life at Yarrabah School (5 – 18yrs). The first graduation occurs when ‘Middle’ school students (those that have completed a 6/7 review process) enter ‘Inters’. Yarrabah students experience a final graduation ceremony in their 18th year.

Achievement

In 2014 all students at Yarrabah were benchmarked in English and Mathematics. 100% students achieved their goals in English and Mathematics with 94.5% achieving good or better in English and 96% in Mathematics. A supportive factor was the allocation of a teacher to benchmark all students. 90% of teaching staff were trained using the online ABLES modules to enable future ABLES assessments and moderation.

Staff were involved in assessing /evaluating ACARA trial materials and strategies in English for students on Pre foundation levels (A-D). Staff shared sessions at Teacher Meetings with the focus on activities, strategies and resources to improve English and Mathematics outcomes.

Yarrabah has achieved the unique status of being a leader in implementing the ‘Learn to Play’ program and delivering ‘Social Safety’ programs. Family Planning Victoria have used the Social Safety Program developed at Yarrabah in professional development materials and Yarrabah staff were invited to present a session on ‘Learn to Play’ at the Principal Association of Special Schools conference in 2014.

Students have developed and refined their ability to understand the nature of play sessions, develop empathy towards others, reflecting on feelings, developed behavior expectations, object substitution, deccentration and role play skills. The play based program has enabled students to interact in more positive ways with students and adults at school, home and in the wider community.

The school works in partnership with Monash University to provide 6 days of professional development, observational opportunities, presentations and sharing best practice with education officials from Thailand each year. The school is widely regarded as an outstanding example of individualising opportunities and differentiating learning for students with disabilities. This partnership is likely to continue.

Yarrabah School encourages leadership within the student body. School captains are selected each year and the exploration of a ‘Student Voice’ group will be researched and trialed in 2015. Student leaders run school assemblies, prepare and deliver canteen orders, present awards, and represent the school during all major functions.

Ability based streaming was trialed in the Inters and Seniors program. Streaming has been chosen as the most appropriate way to allocate content and staff resources to meet individual needs in the following areas: English, Maths, Travel Education, Physical Education, Work Skills and Social Safety have been included in this program. Student and family support for this program has ensured that 2015 streaming will continue.

Engagement

In 2014 100 % of students achieved their social skill goals. This achievement was supported by all teaching staff attending social skills courses during 2014 led by the Occupational Therapist. The Social skills mean was 5.75 in 2014.

We are proud of our working partnership with outside agencies and community organisations and the contributions they make to our learning programs. In 2014 these programs included:

- ‘Workskills’ program in collaboration with ‘Hands on Learning’, to provide students with a work related experience on campus. This program engages students who really enjoy using their hands to build and make projects.
- Community Access in 2014 provided students varied opportunities to access community spaces and reinforce and / or practice skills. It also ensured that students were provided opportunities to demonstrate understandings in different contexts within the community.
- Work Experience provided students opportunities to work off campus and gain greater insight into their future options, choices or suitability in future placements.
- Community placements offered students a chance to work alongside students from different schools including Mentone Grammar, Mordialloc College and Cornish College.
- Buddy programs with students from mainstream settings allowed student’s opportunities to model appropriate skills.
- St Louis Catholic Primary School Garden Program allowed students to experience an alternate gardening experience while interacting with age peers.
- The Riding for Disabled (RDA) program provided students with high sensory, physical and intellectual disabilities experience of horse riding.

In 2014 a formal partnership with Beyond the School Gate was established. This partnership is expected to continue into 2015 with a focus on providing senior aged students opportunities to participate in community leisure programs / activities. As a result of networking with schools in the region many senior students attended youth nights with students from other schools.

In 2014 a cohort of senior students were involved in a Coffee Making (Barista) course.

In 2014 a Leading Teacher was appointed to implement a SWPB framework across the school.

- A SWPBS committee was established. The school developed values, symbols, and planning material ready for 2015 implementation. The SWPBS team also designed the 'Gotcha' certificate system to reinforce positive behaviours in 2015. Teacher collaboration has been frequently undertaken across PLC's and within staff meetings to ensure that the SWPBS is consistently adopted.
- Initial development of common language across the school
- Green choice 'Gotcha' certificates handed out at playtime
- Playground green choice social story
- Formal document delivered at staff meeting outlining the use of 'thinking time' and strategies to be used.

In 2014 Yarrabah SWPBS team developed a school wide approach to behaviour in the playground and classrooms (matrix).

Behaviour support plans and risk assessments were reviewed during 2014. Two staff were trained to facilitate Team Teach training with staff in 2015.

The traffic light system was adopted across the junior and middle cohorts. Inters/seniors ran a modified PBS program.

Calm areas within rooms were established across the school. These spaces were used to support the therapy listening program and brushing program assisting students to self-regulate, calm and support concentration.

In 2014 Yarrabah School developed a number of playground activity zones throughout the school. Two new playgrounds were built and a running track was installed with gym equipment to promote healthy lifestyle and activity options for students during leisure times

In 2015 a focus will be placed on all-weather / multipurpose surfaces for sports activity. The school will also develop sensory spaces and begin initial master planning with a focus on mental health and overall wellbeing of our students and families.

Productivity

Additional Mathematics equipment was purchased as a result of identified needs within Domain. Staff consultation and PLC sharing has resulted in improved allocation of resources to meet individual needs of students in Sections.

In 2014 a budget was allocated to facilitate the expansion of the Social Safety Program to the Junior section of the school. Occupational Therapy (OT) staff ran PD sessions for the Junior teaching staff. The Social Safety program is now extended to the Junior section of the school.

With fundraising the school has installed two adventure playground spaces and secured a donation of up to \$35,000 to install an all-weather running track in the senior area.

The budget ran a moderate surplus for 2014 and a projected surplus for 2015 based on expected enrolments.

Staffing levels and expertise was appropriately matched to meet the needs of all the students in the school with some adjustments being made throughout the year due to staff illness, long service and student enrolment numbers.

There is a concern that the repeated adding of modular classrooms to meet the significant growth in student numbers, has resulted in the 'built environment' being inadequate. The main concern in 2014 and leading into future is: the lack of connectedness between many classrooms; less than optimum layout in many of the current teaching and learning spaces; and the overloading on components of the infrastructure, such as plumbing (roof leaks and sewerage problems).

All proposed actions identified in the AIP were adequately resourced during the 2014 year and sufficient measures in place to resource predicted needs of new SSP into 2015 and beyond.

Performance Summary

The Government School Performance Summary provides an overview of how this school is performing and how it compares to all other Victorian government schools.

All schools work in partnership with their school community to improve outcomes for children and young people. Sharing this information with parents and the wider school community will foster engagement and collaboration to support further gains and positive learning experiences for all students.

Key: Range of results for the middle 60% of Victorian government schools: Result for this school: Median of all Victorian government schools:

School Profile

School Enrolments

A total of 138 students were enrolled at this school in 2014, 42 female and 96 male.

Overall socio-economic profile

Based on the school's Student Family Occupation index which takes into account parents' occupations.



Proportion of students with English as a second language.



Parent Satisfaction Summary

Average level of parent satisfaction with the school, as derived from the annual *Parent Opinion* survey. The score is reported on a scale of 1 to 7, where 7 is the highest possible score.



School Staff Survey

Measures the percent endorsement by staff on school climate derived from the annual *School Staff survey*. The percent endorsement indicates the percent of positive responses (agree or strongly agree) on school climate from staff at the school.

Data are suppressed for schools with fewer than three respondents to the survey for confidentiality reasons.



How to read the Performance Summary

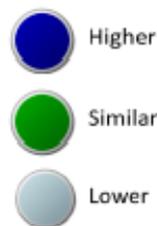
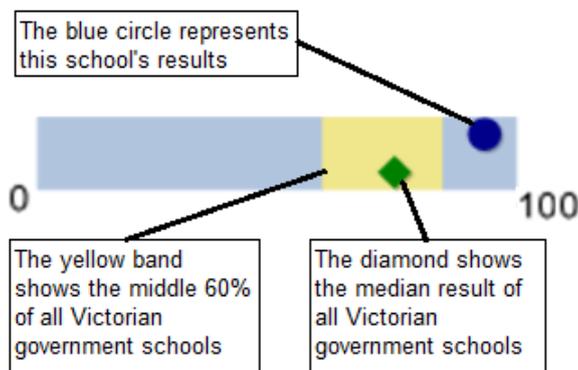
What are student outcomes?

Student outcomes show the achievements of students in this school in English and Mathematics. They also show results in national literacy and numeracy tests and, for secondary colleges, the Victorian Certificate of Education (VCE) examinations. They provide important information about student attendance and engagement at school.

For secondary colleges, the Performance Summary also provides information about how many students at this school go on to further studies or full-time work after leaving school.

You can see these results for the latest year, as well as the average of the last four years (where available).

The Performance Summary also allows you to compare student outcomes for students at this school with the outcomes of students in all other Victorian government schools.



What is a *School Comparison*?

The *School comparison* is a way of comparing school performance that takes into account the different student intake characteristics of each school.

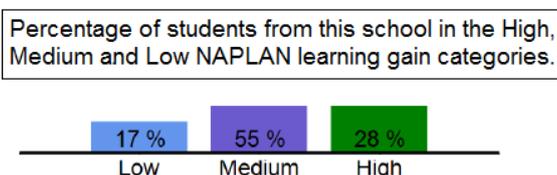
A *School comparison* takes into account the school's academic intake, the socio-economic background of students, the number of Indigenous students, the number of non-English speaking and refugee students, the number of students with a disability, and the size and location of the school.

The *School comparison* measures show that most schools are doing well and are achieving results that are '**similar**' to what we would estimate given the background characteristics of their students. Some schools are doing exceptionally well with the students they have, and have '**higher**' performance. Some schools have '**lower**' performance after taking into account their students' characteristics – these schools will receive targeted support to ensure that there is improvement.

Looking at both the student outcomes and school comparisons provides important information about what a school is doing well and the areas that require further improvement.

Additionally, NAPLAN learning gain charts are provided for each of the NAPLAN domains. These compare a student's current year NAPLAN result to the results of all 'similar' Victorian students (i.e. students in all sectors in the same year level who had the same NAPLAN score two years prior).

If the current year result is in the top 25% their gain level is categorised as 'High', the middle 50% is categorised as 'Medium' and the bottom 25% is categorised as 'Low'.



More information on school comparison performance measures can be found at:

<http://www.education.vic.gov.au/school/principals/management/pages/performreports.aspx>

What is the meaning of '*Data not available*'?

For some schools, there are too few students to provide data. For other schools, there are no students at some levels, so school comparisons are not possible. Newly opened schools have only the latest year of data and no averages from previous years. The Department also recognises the unique circumstances of Specialist, Select Entry, English Language and Community Schools where school comparisons are not appropriate.

What is this school doing to improve?

All schools have a plan to improve outcomes for their students. The '*About Our School*' statement provides a summary of this school's improvement plan.

Financial Performance and Position

Financial Performance - Operating Statement Summary for the year ending 31 December, 2014

Financial Position as at 31 December, 2014

Revenue	Actual
Student Resource Package	\$5,520,910
Government Provided DE&T Grants	\$555,956
Government Grants State	\$9,725
Revenue Other	\$12,284
Locally Raised Funds	\$213,153
Total Operating Revenue	\$6,312,028

Funds Available	Actual
High Yield Investment Account	\$30,253
Official Account	\$5,008
Other Accounts	\$85,952
Total Funds Available	\$121,213

Expenditure	
Student Resource Package	\$5,506,880
Books & Publications	\$5,985
Communication Costs	\$6,097
Consumables	\$65,871
Miscellaneous Expense	\$127,352
Professional Development	\$17,751
Property and Equipment Services	\$360,495
Salaries & Allowances	\$86,066
Trading & Fundraising	\$26,003
Travel & Subsistence	\$11,262
Utilities	\$39,826
Adjustments	(\$727)

Financial Commitments	
Operating Reserve	\$10,000
Asset/Equipment Replacement < 12 months	\$25,000
Capital - Buildings/Grounds incl SMS<12 months	\$40,000
Maintenance - Buildings/Grounds incl SMS<12 months	\$20,000
School Based Programs	\$15,741
Other recurrent expenditure	\$10,472
Total Financial Commitments	\$121,213

Total Operating Expenditure **\$6,252,862**

Net Operating Surplus/-Deficit **\$59,166**

Asset Acquisitions **\$45,435**

Misc Expenses may include Bank charges, Health and Personal Development, Administration charges, Camp/Excursion costs and Taxation charges.

Salaries and Allowances refers to school-level payroll.

Financial performance and position commentary